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Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012

Mobility disabilities among Canadians aged 15 years and older, 2012

by Christine Bizier, Gail Fawcett and Sabrina Gilbert

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^{p} preliminary
^{r} revised
x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E} use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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Mobility disabilities among Canadians aged 15 years and older, 2012

The results presented in this fact sheet are from the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), which surveyed residents of private dwellings who reported an activity limitation and who were aged 15 years and older at the time of the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS).

According to the CSD, respondents are considered to have a disability only if they report a difficulty or impairment due to a long-term condition or health problem and they report that they are limited in their daily activities as a result of their condition. Appendix A describes how the CSD defines mobility disabilities.

It should be noted that the population living in institutions, including residential care facilities, was not included in the 2012 CSD. Further details are available in the *Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012: Concepts and Methods Guide*: 89-654-X2014001.

According to the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), 3,775,900 (13.7%) Canadians aged 15 years and older reported some type of disability, and among them, 1,971,800 (7.2% of Canadian adults) were identified as having a mobility disability that limited their daily activities (Table 1). The most prevalent underlying condition reported by those with mobility disabilities was arthritis.[1]

Table 1
Prevalence of disability by type, among adults aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012

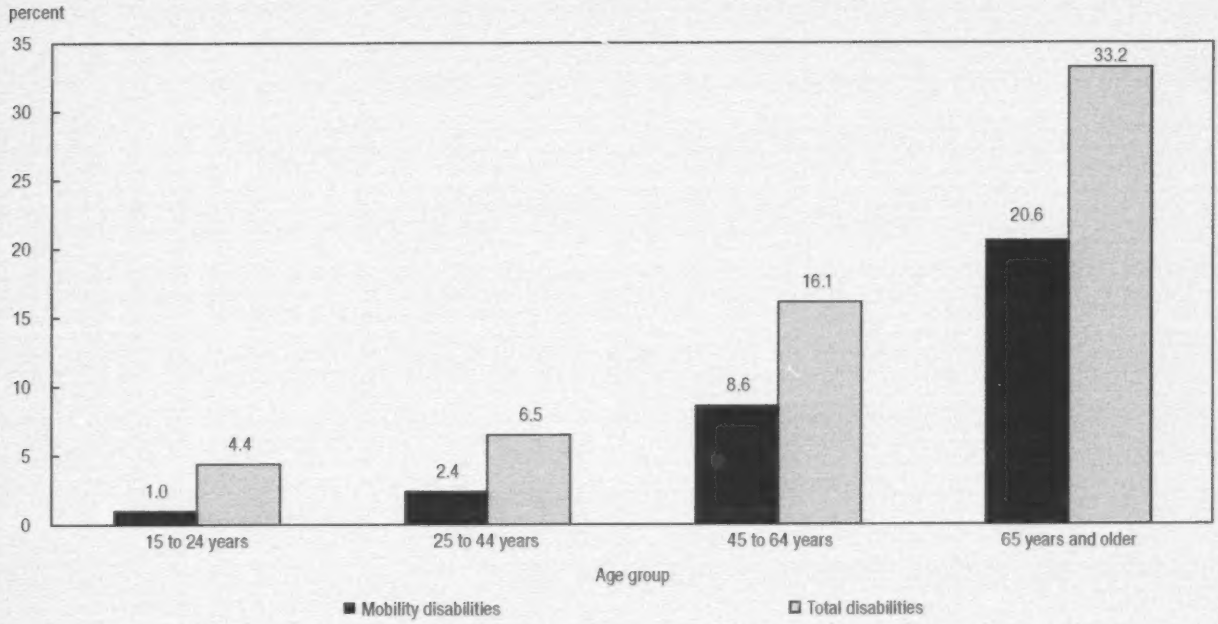
Disability type	Population	Percentage
Total disability	**3,775,900**	**13.7**
Pain-related	2,664,200	9.7
Flexibility	2,078,000	7.6
Mobility	1,971,800	7.2
Mental health-related	1,059,600	3.9
Dexterity	953,100	3.5
Hearing	874,600	3.2
Seeing	756,300	2.8
Memory	628,200	2.3
Learning	622,300	2.3
Developmental	160,500	0.6
Unknown	79,500	0.3

Note: Individuals may have more than one type of disability; therefore, the sum of all individual disability types is greater than the number of "total disabilities".
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

As with disability in general, the likelihood of having a mobility disability increased substantially with age—ranging from a prevalence rate of 1.0% for those aged 15 to 24 to a rate of 20.6% for those aged 65 and older (Chart 1). Women reported a higher rate of mobility disabilities than men in all age groups, with the biggest gap being in the 65 and older age group where 22.5% of women reported a mobility disability compared with 18.3% of men.

1. However, heart disease was also reported by a substantial proportion of individuals either as a primary or secondary underlying condition.

Chart 1
Prevalence of mobility disabilities and total disabilities by age group, aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012

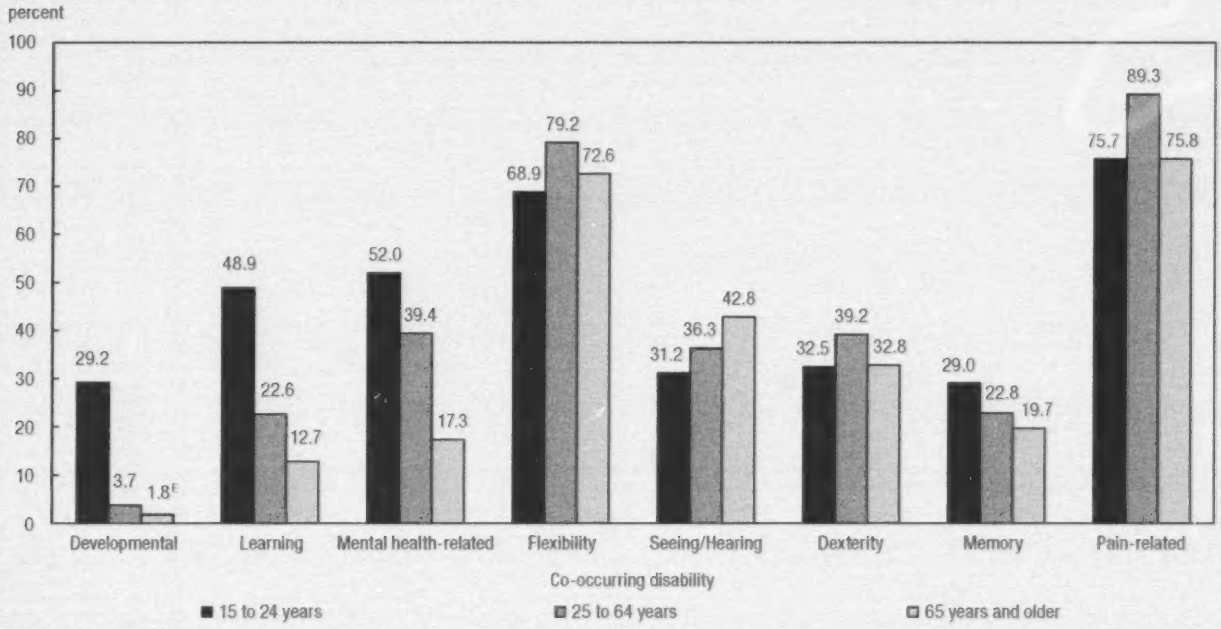


Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

Multiple disabilities

Mobility disabilities frequently co-occurred with other types of disabilities: 95.7% of adults with a mobility disability also reported at least one other type of disability in 2012. Regardless of age, mobility disabilities were most likely to co-occur with pain-related disabilities, with over four in five (82.9%) of those with a mobility disability reporting this disability type. Among young adults (aged 15 to 24) with mobility disabilities, cognitive disability types were more likely to be present, after pain and flexibility.

Chart 2
Prevalence of co-occurring disability types among adults with a mobility disability, by age group, aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012



E use with caution
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

Education

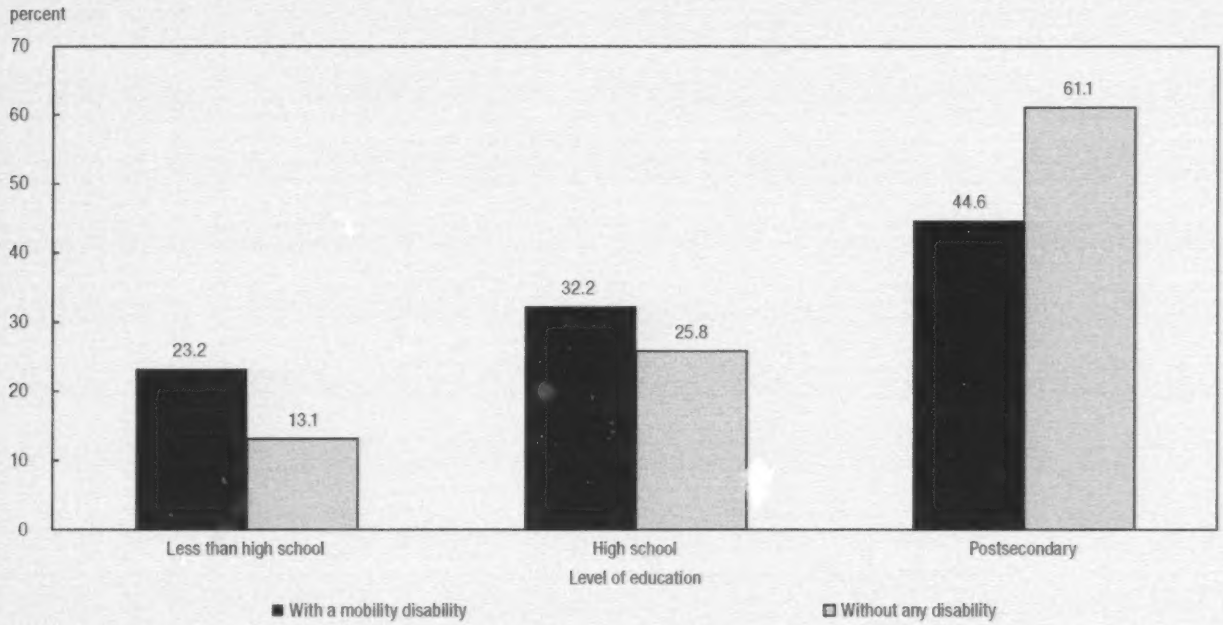
Educational attainment

Working-age adults (aged 15 to 64) with mobility disabilities had overall lower levels of educational attainment than those who did not have any type of disability. For example, adults aged 15 to 64 who were not in school and who reported a mobility disability were more likely than those without any type of disability to have not completed high school (23.2% versus 13.1%). This pattern was particularly pronounced among those aged 25 to 44: individuals with a mobility disability were more than twice as likely to have not completed high school compared with their counterparts without any type of disability (23.1% versus 9.5%).[2]

Similarly, those aged 15 to 64 with a mobility disability were less likely (44.6%) than their counterparts without a disability (61.1%) to have completed postsecondary qualifications.[3]

2. It is important to note that 95.7% of those reporting a mobility disability also reported at least one other type of disability.
3. "Postsecondary" includes trades certificates, college diplomas, university certificates below bachelor level and university degrees.

Chart 3
Proportion of the population with a mobility disability compared to those without any disability by highest level of education, aged 15 to 64 years, Canada, 2012



Notes: Excludes population still in school.
"Postsecondary" includes trades certificates, college diplomas, university certificates below bachelor level and university degrees.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

Educational experiences

In the 2012 CSD (Canadian Survey on Disability), adults with a disability who were currently or had recently[4] been in school were asked a series of questions about their educational experiences and how their condition or conditions may have affected these experiences.[5] More than half of adults with a mobility disability reported that their condition(s) had influenced their choice of courses/careers. Similarly, over two in five indicated that their disability or disabilities resulted in them taking fewer courses (Table 2).

Table 2
Effect of disability on educational experiences of adults with a mobility disability, aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012

Effect of disability	Percentage
Choice of courses/career influenced by disability	56.7
Took fewer courses due to disability	44.2
Education interrupted due to disability	38.9
Took longer to achieve current level due to disability	37.7
Went back to school for retraining due to disability	35.6
Discontinued education due to disability	33.8
Changed course of studies due to disability	33.0
People avoided/excluded you in school due to disability	32.3

Note: Includes individuals currently in school or in school within the last five years and who had a disability while in school.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

4. Includes those who were currently in school or had been in school within the past five years and who had their disability during their educational experience.
5. Note that these individuals may have had multiple disabilities, and thus their educational experiences could have been a result of any combination of them.

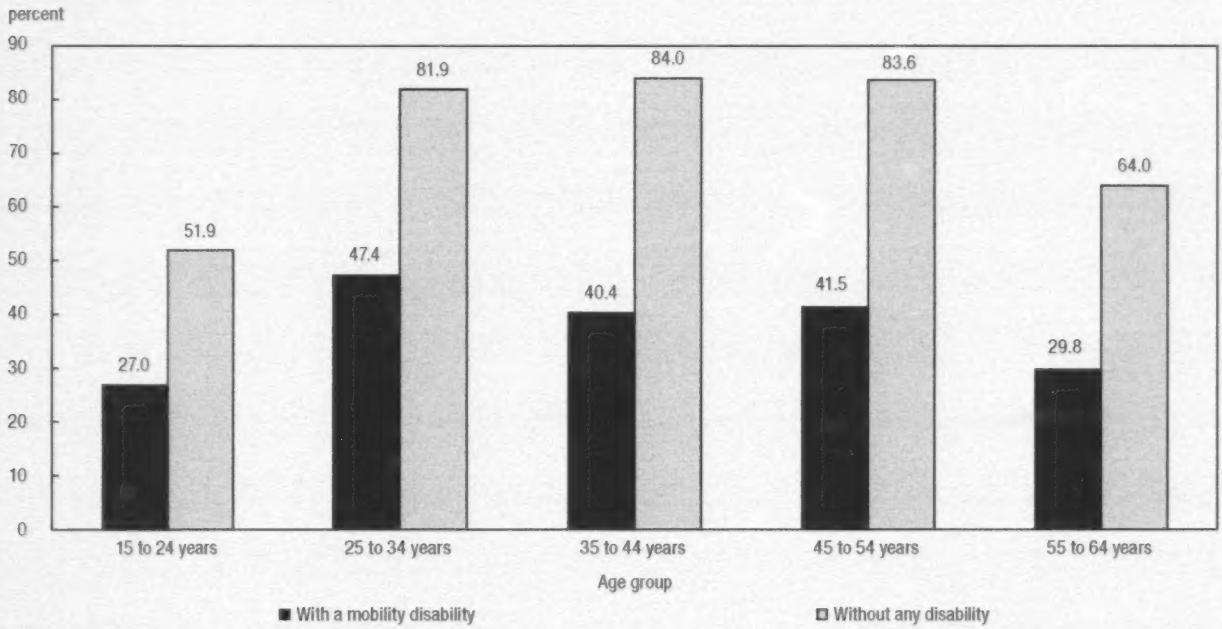
Employment

Labour force status

Over half (58.4%) of adults aged 15 to 64 with a mobility disability were not in the labour force, and another 5.6% were unemployed.[6]

The employment rate of working-age adults, aged 15 to 64, with mobility disabilities was 36.0%, about half the employment rate of those aged 15 to 64 who did not have any type of disability (73.6%). Men with mobility disabilities were more likely to be employed than their female counterparts (39.8% versus 33.0%). In each age group, those without any disability were roughly twice as likely to be employed as those with a mobility disability; however, this pattern was more pronounced in the older age groups (Chart 4).

Chart 4
Employment rates of adults with a mobility disability and adults without any disability, by age group, aged 15 to 64 years, Canada, 2012



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

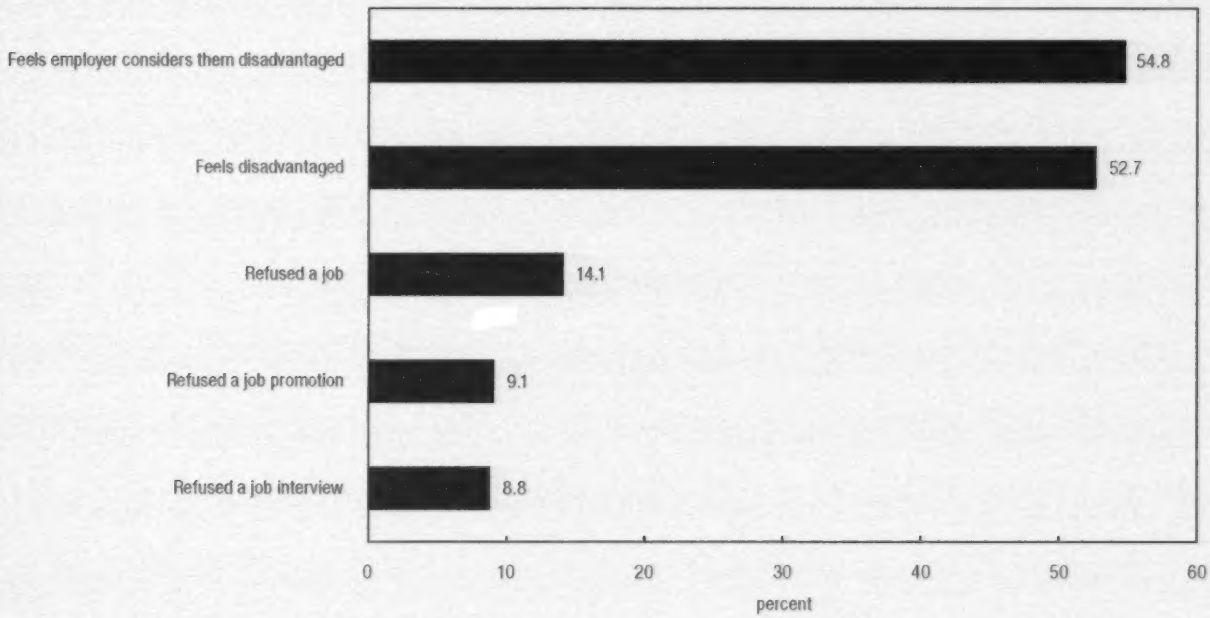
Disability in the workplace

Nearly one-fifth (19.1%) of employed adults with a mobility disability indicated that their employer was unaware of their condition(s).

Among those with a mobility disability who were either currently in the labour market or had been within the previous five years, 54.8% reported that they believed their employer considered them disadvantaged in employment and 52.7% reported that they felt disadvantaged in employment (Chart 5). With respect to more specific indicators of disadvantage in the labour market, 14.1% believed that they had been refused a job, 9.1% felt they had been refused a promotion, and 8.8% believed they had been refused a job interview—all due to their disability or disabilities. It is important to remember that this is based on the impact of all disability types these individuals with a mobility disability may have had.

6. It is important to note that 95.7% of those reporting a mobility disability also reported at least one other type of disability.

Chart 5
Perceived employment discrimination or disadvantage among adults with a mobility disability, aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012



Note: Includes individuals currently in the labour force or who had been within the last five years.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

Job modifications

Overall, 57.9% of adults with a mobility disability who were or had been recently employed[7] stated that they needed at least one type of work accommodation such as modified work hours (33.7%), special back supports (24.5%), modified duties (21.4%), a modified work station (16.5%), accessible parking (10.8%), accessible elevators (9.9%) or other job accommodations. Of those requiring modifications, 50.6% reported that all of their needs had been met, while 26.2% indicated that some needs had been met. Another 23.3% reported that none of their needs had been met. Given the high rate of co-occurrence with other types of disabilities, some of these accommodations may have been for disabilities other than mobility.

Hours worked

Employed working-age adults, aged 15 to 64, with a mobility disability worked an average of 34 hours per week,[8] which is less than the average number for those without any reported type of disability (37 hours).[9]

7. Includes those who were employed, those who were unemployed and had worked in the past five years, those who were not in the labour force but had worked in the past five years (and were able to work or stated that an accommodation would allow them to work), and those who retired within the past five years who stated that their retirement was involuntary.
8. Refers to the actual number of hours worked for pay during the week prior to the reference week on the National Household Survey.
9. While the difference between those with a mobility disability and those without any disability in hours worked was statistically significant for the overall working age group, aged 15 to 64, there were no statistically significant differences within some age groups. Statistically significant differences in hours worked per week (for those with a mobility disability compared with no disability) were found only among those aged 25 to 34 and those aged 45 to 54.

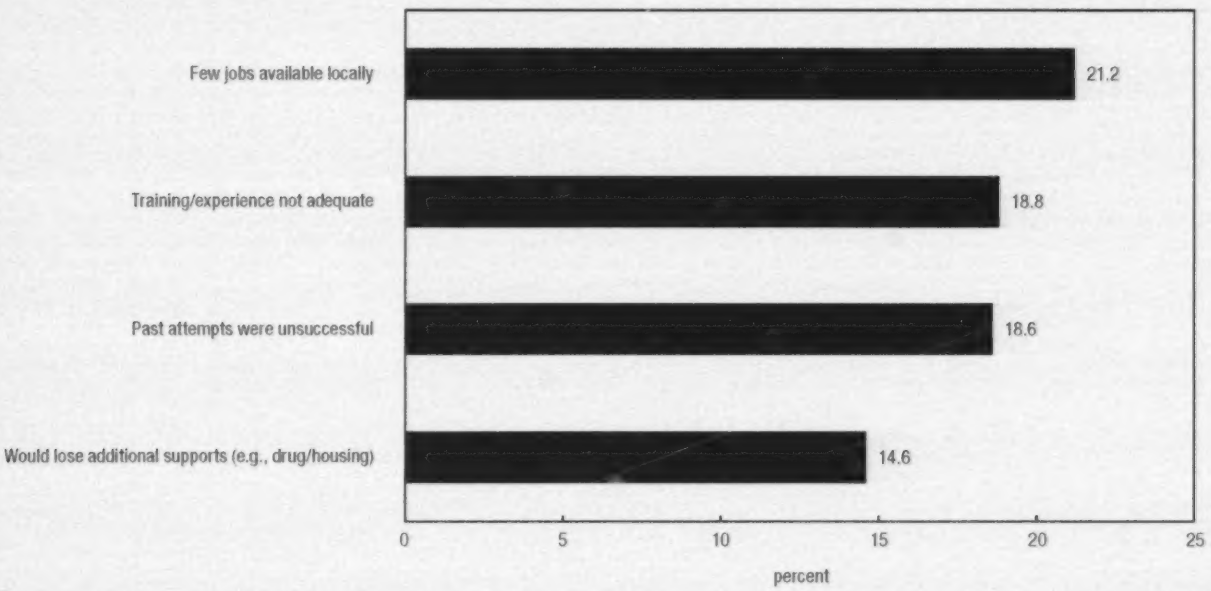
Not in the labour force

Among those with a mobility disability, aged 15 to 64, who were not in the labour force, the majority (83.0%) reported that their condition(s) prevented them from working. Of these individuals, 15.0% indicated that some type of accommodation would allow them to work. As well, 21.7% indicated that they would look for work in the next 12 months.[10] Respondents who planned to look for work were asked why they intended to do so:

- 42.5% expected their condition to improve,
- 10.9%[E] planned to take training, and
- 10.7%[E] expected workplace changes/improvements.

Many of those who were not in the labour force encountered barriers that discouraged them from looking for work. Some of the most commonly reported job search barriers for those with a mobility disability were a lack of available local jobs (21.2%) and inadequate training or experience (18.8%) (Chart 6).

Chart 6
Prevalence of job search barriers for adults with a mobility disability who were not in the labour force, aged 15 to 64 years, Canada, 2012



Note: Excludes individuals who retired more than five years ago, those who retired voluntarily, and those who stated that they had never worked but that their condition did not limit the amount or kind of work they could perform.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

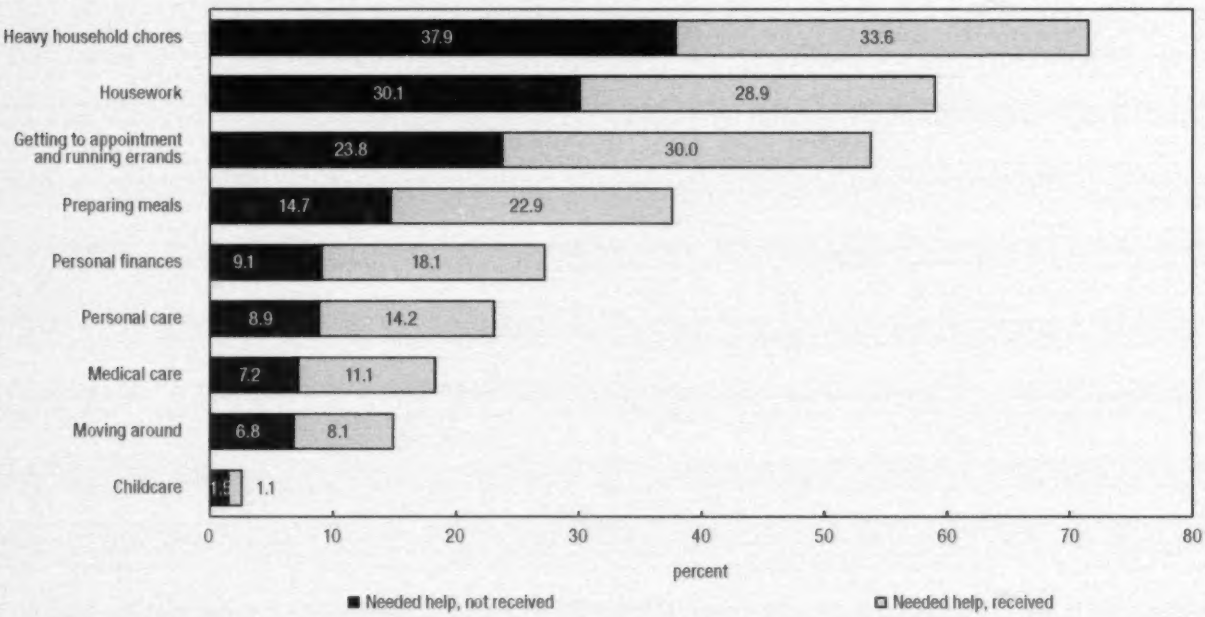
Supports

Overall, nearly 9 in 10 (86.7%) adults with a mobility disability indicated that they required help with some type of everyday activity and nearly two-thirds (63.0%) of these people reported having some level of unmet need for at least one of these support requirements.

While four in five (80.2%) adults with a mobility disability reported receiving help with at least one type of everyday activity, there was unmet need for various specific types of supports, as summarized in Chart 7. For example, 37.9% of all adults with a mobility disability had an unmet need for help with heavy household chores, while 6.8% had an unmet need for help with moving around the home and 1.5% had an unmet need for childcare.

10. Note: these two groups are not mutually exclusive.

Chart 7
Met and unmet needs for help with everyday activities among adults with a mobility disability, aged 15 years and older, Canada, 2012



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012.

Help with everyday activities was most likely to have come from family members, particularly those living in the same household. For example, among those receiving assistance with such activities, 65.3% of those with mobility disabilities received some help from family members living with them and 44.8% received some help from family members who were not living with them. Help with everyday activities came from other sources as well. For example, among those who received some assistance, 29.7% of those with mobility disabilities also indicated receiving help from a friend or neighbour, 23.0% paid an individual or organization for help, and 15.1% reported receiving help from an organization, free of charge.

Income

Personal income for working-age adults

The median personal income (before taxes) of working-age adults aged 15 to 64 with a mobility disability[11] was $17,100—which is slightly over half that of those without any disabilities ($31,200).[12] Men with mobility disabilities had a higher median personal income than their female counterparts ($21,700 versus $14,700).

Those with a mobility disability were also more likely to be reliant on government transfers[13] as their major source of income (58.7%) compared to those without any reported type of disability (18.7%). Furthermore, it was found that employed adults aged 15 to 64 with a mobility disability had a lower median employment income[14] than those without any reported type of disability ($24,100 versus $34,100 respectively). Again, men with mobility disabilities had a higher median employment income than their female counterparts ($25,800 versus $20,400).

11. It is important to note that 95.7% of those reporting a mobility disability also reported at least one other type of disability.
12. This calculation includes those with zero or negative personal income amounts before taxes.
13. Government transfers include a variety of transfer payments from federal, provincial, territorial or municipal governments such as: Old Age Security; Guaranteed Income Supplements; Canada or Quebec Pension Plan; Employment Insurance; Social Assistance; Child Benefits; and other income from government sources.
14. This includes income from wages, salaries, and self-employment.

Conclusion

Adults with a mobility disability face many challenges. Co-occurrence with other disability types was very high. In particular, the majority of individuals with a mobility disability also had a pain-related disability and/or a flexibility disability, and this was observed across all age groups. At the same time, educational attainment and employment levels among those with a mobility disability were lower than those who did not report any disability. Even when employed, those with a mobility disability had lower levels of employment income. Consequently, it is not surprising that working-age adults with a mobility disability were also more likely than those without any disability to rely on government transfers as their major source of income. Nearly 9 in 10 adults with a mobility disability required some type of help with everyday activities (in particular, the more physically demanding activities such as heavy household chores and housework), and about two-thirds of them had some level of unmet need.

Appendix A

Identification of adults with a mobility disability

The 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD) identifies persons with a mobility disability as persons who have difficulty walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes or have difficulty walking up/down a flight of stairs and have their daily activities limited because of these difficulties. The survey used the newly developed Disability Screening Questions (DSQ) to identify disability. The initial step in identifying a mobility disability was to establish the existence of difficulty with mobility. This was done using the following questions:

DSQ_13 How much difficulty do you have walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes without resting?

- No difficulty
- Some (difficulty)
- A lot (of difficulty)
- You cannot do at all

DSQ_14 How much difficulty do you have walking up or down a flight of stairs, about 12 steps without resting?

- No difficulty
- Some (difficulty)
- A lot (of difficulty)
- You cannot do at all

Those who indicated at least "some" difficulty with either task received a follow-up question to determine how often the difficulty limited their daily activities.

DSQ_15 How often does this difficulty walking and/or using stairs limit your daily activities?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

A mobility disability was identified when respondents reported being limited at least sometimes, regardless of degree of difficulty. If they reported being limited rarely, they were only considered to have a mobility disability if they also indicated having a lot of difficulty or being unable to perform at least one of the two tasks.

An estimated 2,635,800 Canadian adults reported having difficulty with at least one of the two mobility tasks. Of these, 664,100 (2.4% of the adult population) were not limited by their condition, and 1,971,800 (7.2%) were identified as having a mobility disability, based on the methodology described above.